

D.J.R. Bruckner

Berrigan case has the look of a legend

In 1606 the British government executed Guy Fawkes, who was convicted of a conspiracy to blow up Parliament with gunpowder. Even now, before Parliament opens its annual session with the monarch's speech from the throne, a little troop of men in 17th-century garb searches the basement ceremonially to make sure the building is safe. For centuries English children were entertained, or frightened, by the tale of Fawkes, the catholic conspirator against a protestant government.

The religious overtones are mostly gone now, but Nov. 5 is still celebrated nationally in England as Guy Fawkes Day. A museum at Oxford has the lamp which Fawkes is said to have used in exploring the subterranean passages under Westminster Palace, looking for the best place to plant his gunpowder. It was the tangible exhibit in a trial determined by the testimony of informants.

No torture now

The defendants in the Kissinger kidnap caper, of course, do not face torture or drawing and quartering. But this entire affair has the look of legend about it. The peace movement made an effort to turn the 1968 conspiracy trial of Dr. Benjamin Spock and others into a legend, but it seems not to have succeeded. The Chicago Seven defendants and several formidable writers did their best to popularize that case, but it is fading from the memory even now. But this case of Rev. Philip Berrigan and five others stands a better chance of being famous for a long time. It is already exciting wry jokes and

humorous fantasy. It has that element of imagination the others lacked.

Initially the reaction of many, it seems, is to pronounce this alleged conspiracy—to blow up underground heating systems in Washington and to kidnap Presidential Adviser Henry Kissinger—incredible. Others, including members of congress, have questioned the purposes of the government in bringing the indictment.

But the allegations are credible. Bombings have become common events in the last few years. Protest groups, or wild people, have bombed all kinds of buildings in recent years; they have issued threats and manifestos boasting of their work. Men have died in some bombings. Extremist elements in the antiwar movement sometimes claim justification for violence. Some of them glorify it.

Diplomatic kidnapping

Kidnaping government officials is a frightening phenomenon now. Within the past year officials and diplomats have been kidnaped in Latin America, in Spain, in Canada, and have been held hostage during the negotiation of political demands.

Father Berrigan, and his brother the Rev. Daniel Berrigan, are already in prison, convicted of having destroyed draft records in Maryland four years ago. Before they were imprisoned, both became fugitives. Father Daniel Berrigan eluded capture for five months, making a number of public appearances and involving hundreds of people in a conspiracy of silence, people who saw him, talked with

him, helped him travel, hid him out in their homes.

Among American catholics, these two men have had a widespread effect. They would not have made such an impact if catholics, especially the younger ones, had not become increasingly opposed to the war in recent years. It was only a few years ago that Pope Paul, speaking in New York, startled many catholics by his outspoken remarks against the war. Things have changed greatly since.

First card burner

The first draft-card burner to go to prison for his act was a young New Yorker who claimed that his catholic faith inspired his opposition to the war. The Berrigans poured blood on draft files. Recently a catholic antiwar group claimed that 70 per cent of all people arrested in draft protests are catholics.

Clergy, and nuns, have stepped out in front of the antiwar movement, and members of the hierarchy are bound by conscience and tradition to defend their right to do so. This is a tremendous change in the public presence of the catholic community in the United States. It is most unlikely that a majority of the 45 million American catholics are actively pacifist, but a very conspicuous minority is, including thousands of priests.

It is significant of the change in the image of the church that Lawrence Cardinal Shehan of Baltimore publicly asked federal authorities to release two of the priests arrested in this case, and then visited them in jail. Of the six defendants indicted so far, three are priests, one a

former priest and one a nun; among the alleged co-conspirators are a priest, an ex-priest and three nuns.

The indictment does not say what the six would have done with Kissinger if they had abducted him, but FBI Director J. Edgar Hoover told a congressional committee last November that the plot was to hold the presidential adviser until the government agreed to scale down the war.

Caught in the act

If this alleged plot is real, and if Hoover had kept his silence, presumably the government could have apprehended the plotters in the act. What we have now is a charge of conspiracy, legally difficult, hard to raise a defense against, the kind of charge that is always dangerous because it is concerned with the attitudes and intentions of those accused. Such a prosecution always leaves behind some debris of doubt about the conduct of government itself, especially when the charge is based partly on the testimony of an informant as this one is said to be.

Guy Fawkes served the British rulers for centuries, a powerful symbol of fear. It is possible that the trial of this case, which is bound to be sensational, will inhibit the spread of active antiwar sentiment, especially in the catholic church. But it is also possible that, unless the government produces very solid evidence, the trial will create a deeper distrust of the methods and intentions of the government.

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On the Right . . . William F. Buckley Jr.

Rhetoric or Policy for Latin America?

BOGOTA, COLOMBIA—They are wondering, in Bogota, whether the Nixon Administration has "A South American policy." It is generally agreed that the Alliance for Progress was a failure. That is to say, the policy towards Latin America enunciated so grandly by President John Kennedy, can be seen to be related historically to Allende, even as the Versailles Treaty can be seen as related to Hitler. This does not mean that Woodrow Wilson's schematic visions required Hitler, any more than the New Frontier's required the communization of Chile. Merely that although Mr. Wilson and Mr. Kennedy had quite contrary intentions, what in fact happened, was a) Hitler, and now, b) Allende.

Colombia is both distressed and awed by what happened. Distressed, because the leaders of both major parties in Colombia recognize that the Chilean way is not likely to produce any desirable result. Awed, because it simply isn't plain that it will prove possible, in the crucial years ahead, to resist the forces that are now convulsing Chile.

What happened in Chile hurt most, because we regarded Chile as the exemplar of progressivism. It is as though the child on whom we devoted the most attention and care had decided, upon finishing graduate school, to embrace cannibalism.

Now the first thing to learn about Latin America is that everyone there shares a single resentment: namely, that Americans tend to lump the whole of the area together. On this point, Latin Americans speak fiercely. They ask, for instance, why it is that we do not treat Europeans in the same way. We do not, in fact, assume that that which holds true in England also holds true in Italy, or Finland. Why then, should we assume that if Chile went so far berserk as to elect a Marxist president, it should follow that Colombia might do the same thing?

And yet, even as one agrees that there

are enormous differences racial, temperamental, cultural, historic between for instance Colombia and Brazil, still we realize—as do South Americans—that there are sympathetic vibrations, such that one cannot, in thinking about Colombia, simply dismiss the Chilean experience, or for that matter the Cuban experience. The diplomatic imperative is on the one hand to recognize the individuality of Latin American countries, while coping with the great historical tug which, expressing itself in Cuba and Chile, inescapably affects the destiny of, for instance, Colombia.

President Pastrana has been in office only a few months. He is, officially, a Conservative. He is the last of a series of presidents who, by covenant, agreed to alternate executive power. That is of course no way to achieve strategic internal harmony. It is rather like wage-price controls. What happens is that the forces of the market insist on political distinctions, so that the differences between individual members of the same party are now at least as significant as differences between members of different parties.

And, now, the leaders of Colombia, face to face with the end of the Liberal-Conservative agreement in 1974, are girding for a showdown. There are two great magnetic fields affecting Colombian politics. One of them is Chile. Chile is the symbol of the success of iconoclastic-leftist demagoguery. The other pole is: the United States. We are the symbol of total diplomatic ineptitude, combined with brilliant empirical success. I.e., the United States, without a "Latin American policy," is the country that has solved as many of the social problems as ever have been solved on the face of the earth, by rejecting Marxism. Chile is the country which, embracing Marxism, suggests to the voting masses of Latin America an exciting alternative, never mind Cuba, never mind Russia, never mind China.

The problem for Mr. Nixon is virtually

insoluble. What more can he do? The Alliance for Progress didn't work, and in any case we continue to spend, in Colombia, about as much money (one hundred million per year) as we did under Kennedy-Johnson. Probably Mr. Nixon should dish up some rhetoric—very important. Rhetoric satisfied urgent human needs, particularly where form means so much (Colombian peasants who would not

be able to answer the question whether Kennedy was President of the United States, or of Sears Roebuck, hang his likeness on their walls).

It is overdue for Mr. Nixon to say something about Latin America that lifts the spirit, even as we acknowledge that the lonely fight against leftist-demagoguery is their fight, that we can help them, but cannot save them.

Liberation group forms

Another organization is being formed on campus. Why? Because the war is still going on, because Third World people, Native American Indians, Blacks, and Chicanos are still fighting for liberation, because all political prisoners need legal defense and bail money, because Black, Brown and Red brothers and sisters are being harassed and arrested by the police right here in Eugene, and because the quota system, and increasing high fees and tuition at universities in Oregon is limiting or entirely excluding Black, Brown, Red and working class and poor people from attending those universities. These are the reasons for a new group which will be formed on Wednesday in the EMU.

The Liberation Support Group is being formed just for the purpose of supporting liberation struggles like those mentioned above, in whatever manner they appear. The tentative program is to: 1. Provide education concerning internal and international liberation struggles; 2. Raise money to support legal defense for national and local political prisoners; 3. Build a mass movement in support of liberation struggles.

This program will be implemented through several projects. Such projects include a Political Prisoners Support Project which will split to work on

national-international and local political prisoner struggles. This would include Angela Davis, Ruchell Magee, Bobby Seale, Iranian Students, Guatemalan struggles, Black student harassment and Native American Indian arrests, and many, many more. In all cases, raising money for bail and legal defense takes precedence. This will be accomplished by bringing films and speakers. The Jail and Prison Reform project will cover documentation of harassment cases, organize an inspection of the jail, and arrange to collect and donate books and magazines to the jail.

Other projects include: Lettuce Boycott Support; and Abolishing Quota System, High Tuition and Fees. This last project is especially interesting in light of the exorbitant increase in tuition and fees. This quota system limits or completely excludes Black, Brown, Red, and working class and poor whites from attending the university. Now with raised tuition and fees, few if any people other than upper middle class and upper class will be able to attend any university in Oregon!!! If you are interested in any of these projects, or would like to initiate one of your own—COME TO THE LIBERATION SUPPORT GROUP MEETING Wednesday 3:00 EMU. Law students needed!

Nancy Knight
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